



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/723,797	11/25/2003	Toshio Okamura	03698/LH	9087
1933	7590	09/22/2004	EXAMINER	
FRISHAUF, HOLTZ, GOODMAN & CHICK, PC 767 THIRD AVENUE 25TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10017-2023			TSUKERMAN, LARISA Z	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2833	

DATE MAILED: 09/22/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/723,797	OKAMURA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Larisa Z Tsukerman	2833	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 November 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 25 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In regard to claim 1, it is unclear, what the phrase (in line 10) "spring force-increasing means" refers to, and it is not indicated clearly in the Specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a **printed publication** in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

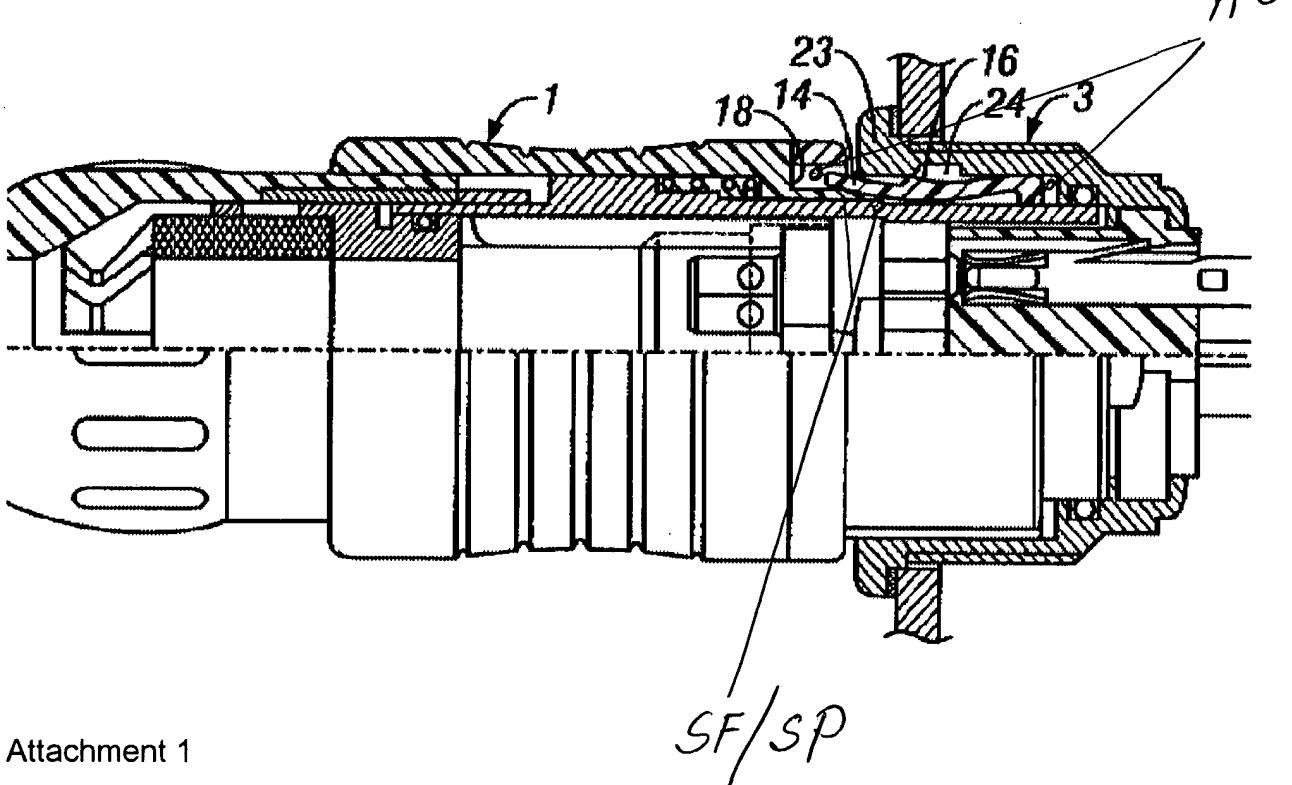
Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Finke (US20020019161).

In regard to claim 1, as best understood, Finke discloses a connector 1 for being connected to a mating connector 3 having a recess 24, comprising:

a housing 11,13;

a locking member 7 provided on an outer peripheral surface of the housing 11,13, the locking member 7 including a fixed portion 14,15 (see Fig. 2) fixed to the housing 11,13, an engaging portion 16 for engagement with the recess 24 of the mating connector 3, and a spring portion 14 (see Fig. 1) for urging the engaging portion 16 toward the recess 24; and

spring force-increasing means 17 and SF (see Attachment 1) for inhibiting the engaging portion 16 from moving more than a predetermined distance when the spring portion 14 is bent using the fixed portion 14,15 as a support, and causing the spring portion 14 to be bent using the engaging portion 16 (see Fig.2) as a support.



Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 2, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finke (US20020019161) in view of Chrysostomou (5653606).

In regard to claim 2, Finke discloses most of the claimed invention including the housing 11,13 has a hollow cylindrical shape, and has an accommodating space AS (see Attachment 1) formed therein for accommodating the spring portion 14 and the engaging portion 16 when the spring portion 14 is bent, the connector 1 further comprising a sliding member 8 mounted on an outer peripheral surface of the locking member 7 in a manner slidable in an axial direction of the housing. However, Finke lacks the sliding member 8 having a window for permitting the engaging portion to escape therein such that the engaging portion can be engaged with the recess of the mating connector when the connector is fitted to the mating connector. Chrysostomou teaches a window 159a/159c in sliding member 159 for permitting the engaging portion 152 to escape therein such that the engaging portion 152 can be engaged with the recess 117 of the mating connector 114 when the connector 104 is fitted to the mating connector. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made and for the same reason, if needed, to include a window of Chrysostomou in structure of Finke.

In regard to claim 3, the spring force - increasing means is a stepped portion SP (see Attachment 1) formed in the housing in a manner protruding into the accommodating space AS.

In regard to claim 5, Finke discloses the spring force-increasing means SF is a ring SP which is wound around the housing in a manner opposed to the engaging portion 16 in a radial direction of the housing (see Attachment 1).

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Finke (US20020019161) in view of Chrysostomou (5653606), as applied to claim 2 above, and further in view of Yuzawa (6352444).

Finke modified by Chrysostomou includes most of the claimed invention except for the spring force-increasing means is on a bottom surface of the engaging portion in a manner protruding into the accommodating space. Yuzawa teaches a **protruding portion** 29 formed on a bottom surface of the engaging portion 27 (see Fig. 3) to prevent the latch arm 22 from excessive bending. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made and for the same reason to include a **protruding portion** of Yuzawa in structure of Finke.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Larisa Z Tsukerman whose telephone number is (571)-

Art Unit: 2833

272-2015. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A Bradley can be reached on (571)-272-2800 ex. 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LT. 09/09/2004


THO D. TA
PRIMARY EXAMINER